PART THREE  
“The Misanthrope” by Moliere  
4/17/12

The last acts of “The Misanthrope” conclude the final love triangles and drama amongst the characters in the story. In scene five, Alceste discovers a letter Celimene wrote to Oronte which shows her deceit. Raging with anger Alceste confronts Celimene. She openly admits to writing the letter but sees Alceste’s behavior ridiculous and shows no guilt. Distraught, Alceste demands Celimene to tell Orante that the letter was intended for a woman and not for him in order to show her loyalty to Alceste. Seeing his idea as absurd, Celimene tells him that he does not deserve her love. At that moment, Alcestes servant enters in a panic, demanding Alceste to leave at once. Due to Alcestes ongoing lawsuit, it is believed that he is in great danger of arrest. Alceste leaves at once to find out more information while telling Celimene that he will be return to speak to her. After finding out about the verdict passed against him, Alceste is outraged and vows to live the rest of his days in complete solitude, far from the society he has lived in for so long. He then asks Celimene to join him in withdrawing from society as a test of her love. Adding to the commotion, Oronte demands Celimene to choose between her two courtiers, Alceste agreeing as well. Celimene finds both of their demands absolutely ridiculous and inappropriate; really she is just scared of publically offending the person she chooses not to be with. Instead, she decides to leave her friend Eliante to “be the judge of her affections.” Eliante refuses to do such a thing, stating that it’s Celimenes responsibility to be open and honest with each of the men. Just as Celimene began pondering the decision at hand, Acaste and Clitandre enter with yet another letter written by Celimene. This time the letter contained numerous insults on each of her suitors and described what she saw as their flaws. Shocked at what he had just heard, Oronte exits the room leaving Celimene. Now she is down to only one, but Celimene drives Alceste away as well because she refuses to retreat into solitude with him.

I found the ending of the play very interesting, but not surprising. With Celimenes indecisive ways, it was no shocker to find that she ended up with neither of the men that loved her so dearly. It was the typical soap opera ending, which I find the book to be just like. Even though the story is dated in time, it still has the same characteristics of a juicy soap that we love today. However, out of the two men I really only feel sorry for Oronte. I side with Oronte because I feel that he was the more caring, genuine guy. He was also the stronger out of the two, showing this was the scene when he walked out of Celimene because of the letter. I admired this because it showed that he wasn’t going to wait on Celimene forever, it was all or nothing for him. As for Alceste, he just seemed to want his cake and to eat it too. He came across as a spoiled, selfish man who got everything he wanted. The part that showed this perfectly was when he vowed to place himself in the complete solitude from the society he lived in. This was all just to make a scene for Celimene and to scare her into being with him. Guys try and pull that trick all the time and I find it very humorous, props to Celimene for not playing into his foolish games. All in all, I found the story very amusing. Even though it was hard to follow at times, I still was hooked on the love triangle going on in the story. It definitely kept me guessing and on my toes for what was going to happen next.

The previous human characteristic that came across to me in this last section was selfishness. The book was written many years ago, and if selfishness was seen a lot back then, it has clearly spanned throughout history. I say selfishness because of one specific scene in the book, Alceste vowing to complete solitude form society. He clearly only said this in order to see how much Celimene loved him, not caring what anyone else had to say except for her. This shows a tremendous amount of selfishness because he is willing to leave all of the people that truly care for him for one that has never cared at all. Did you see Celimene jump up and agree to go with Alceste? No, absolutely not! However, there were two people that did make remarks insisting to encourage Alceste to abandon his plan. These people were Philinte and Eliante, the ones who truly care for him. They knew what he was doing was foolish and probably needed to let him go in order to learn from his mistakes, but because they cared so much they were going to try and talk him out of it. This same scene occurs in real life today, I’ve seen it and lived it. People today always want one specific thing and they will throw everything away to have it. I always ask myself why, but the only answer that comes to my mind is selfishness. In today’s society, some of us just do not appreciate what we have at all. We will push away all the things that are important and meaningful to us because we just want what we want. We don’t think about how it affects the ones around us. Selfishness is a hard characteristic to get rid of. Most of the time people who start off selfish will always be selfish. However, those who take notice to how their selfish ways affect those around them, will put an end to them once and for all.